

WILGEPOORT – Sport Crag

General

Wilgepoort has been a firm favorite with a small but enthusiastic number of traditional climbers from the Pretoria/Johannesburg area since its discovery in 1966. The main TRAD crag is West-North-West-facing, meaning that on summer's days it can be unbearably hot. Consequently it has become more frequently visited during winter, when the temperature on the rock is more bearable. The open aspect of the main crag means that it is much warmer than the deep Magaliesberg kloofs, on most winter's days.

The main SPORT crag is South-South-West facing and largely in the shade in the mornings. It could be a little uncomfortable climbing into the sun from about 13:00. Development of this crag started in September 2014 after the acquisition of this property by the MCSA.



The sport area is above the red line, the trad area is below the red line.

The crags are located in an area of wild, African scenic beauty. It is not uncommon to see a pair of Black Eagles, the resident gynogenic, giant kingfishers and otters fishing in the Big Pool, nor to hear the bark of baboons. When the leaves on the trees and bushes are turning colour, especially those located at water level, the place is a sight to behold. The crag itself is in the picturesque Gouwsberg Valley on the banks of the Wilge River.

Facilities

The camping area is where the access road terminates at the car park. The area is nice and flat with some shade trees. Please don't litter. The river is 20m away and hidden by some bushes.

There is a "Long Drop" toilet. Please do not throw anything in it and keep the lid closed. (take your own TP)

You are welcome to make fire but please do not use any of the wood out of the bush. Not even if it is lying on the ground. Please be careful and don't leave the fire unattended. Kill it, and make sure there is no heat, before going to bed or leaving.

There is NO drinkable water. Do not drink from the river as it is polluted upstream and contains heavy metals.

Descends from climbs

You have two options. Walk up to the top of the ridge and turn left/west and follow the ridge line. Where the sharp decent start, veer a bit to the right/north side of the ridge and you will come down to the car park.

Alternatively turn right/east on top of the ridge and descended by using The Broad gully. It is loose in some places and beware not to touch the stinging nettle plants (some are huge trees and not easy to identify before it is too late).

Access

The roads are passable with normal cars.

The area is private property and locked. Contact MCSA to arrange permits and access. Take note that the office hours are Mon-Fri, 08:00-10:00 so finalize your arrangements in time.

To get to the Sport climbing area, walk upstream on the true right of the river from the car-park, and over the first ridge (look for the cairns a little to your left and away from the water). Continue parallel with the river at first, over the second ridge and then diagonally down to the water's edge, following a vague path. Be careful on the decent as the rock is polished very smooth. Boulder hop upstream till you get to the BIG POOL and cannot continue any more. There should be a vague path cutting through the reeds to your left leading up to the rock face. Turn right (upstream) at the rock face and follow a clear path leading you up the next ridge and over the deepwater solo face. You will get to a yellow rope installed to act as a handrail on the traverse. Be careful as the grass is slippery.

The traverse will take you into The Broad gully.

Other Important Information

Please keep all gates closed and locked.

Water from the river must be sterilised. Rather bring clean drinking water.

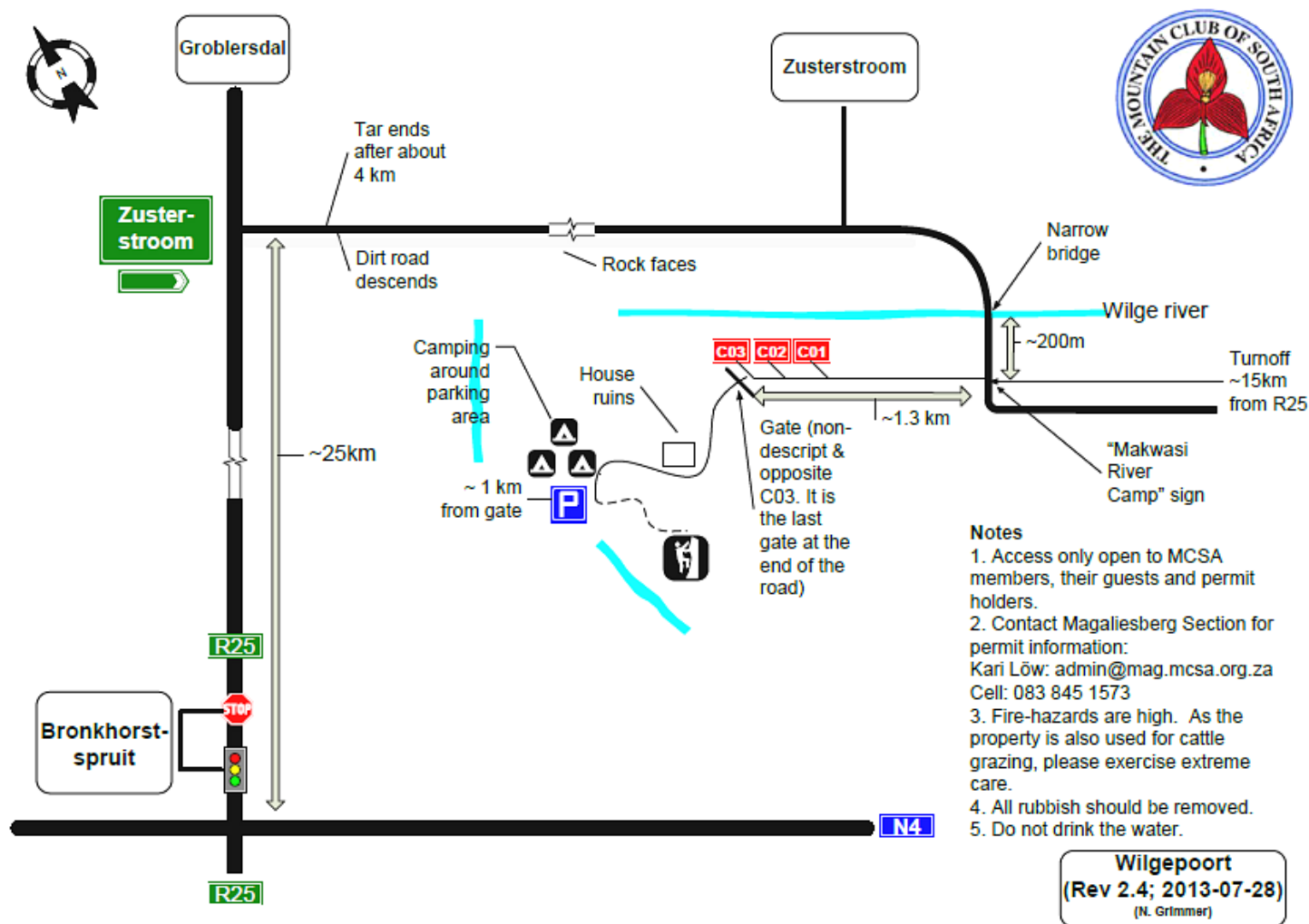
There have been confirmed reports of hippos on the lower pools by the car park. And an unconfirmed report of a crocodile as well.

Fire hazard is high: take all precautions. All rubbish shall be removed, not burned or buried.

Location of Rescue Equipment

Under the tree (a Bequaertiodendron magalismontanum or Transvaal Milkplum/A: Stamvrug) 20 meters up and 10 meters true right of the water drip at the TRAD crag. The 20 meters up to the dump is a grade 7 climb. It is advisable to use rope protection to climb to the dump and also a rope to lower the stretcher or drum in case of an emergency.

* A route of little merit. ** A mediocre route. *** A good route. **** An excellent route. ***** One of the finest/Exceptional.



The Broad Gully

Also known as the North Face, this feature lies between the TRAD and SPORT crags. It comprises a wide, steep gully, running up from the BIG POOL. The gully is thickly wooded in places and also houses some thick stands of nettles and thorns. The SPORT routes are on the true right of the gully.

Note: True right/left is determined by turning your body position until you are standing looking downhill/downstream. You're left and right now represent the "true" left and right.

The Test area

The Test area contains the first routes bolted at this awesome venue. The area consists of a lower rock face, a big "shelf" and a rock face above that.

At the very end of the rope traverse (where the end of the rope is tied to a tree) there is a 2-3m grassy slope and a stone ramp leading up wards at an angle. It is obvious and only a grade 13, so should be recognizable. The first routes leading up to The Shelf starts here.



HEIGHT: 90 - 120 Metres

ASPECT: It faces south-south-west and so has quite a bit of shade in the morning. It is really pleasant to climb here and there are great views of the TRAD crag, Big Pool, baboons and Black Eagles.

EASIER THAN IT LOOKED 13 (3D, A)

At the end of the rope traverse there will be a stone ramp on your left leading up wards at an angle. The right side of the ramp is more vertical and the start of the scramble route is found here.

1. **15m 13 (3D, A)** Climb over the first hanger and scramble up the incline. The route keeps slightly towards the right edge of the ramp to create an airy, exposed feeling. It is easy but take care to place your feet well as the rock is smooth.

Bolted by: 05 Oct 2014 T. Botha and A. Louw.

First ascent: 05 Oct 2014 A. Louw.

EXPECTATIONS 16 (15 aided) (second pitch after EASIER THAN IT LOOKED) (13D, A)

From the top anchors of EASIER THAN IT LOOKED, step out to the left and slightly up to the start of the prominent crack in the corner. Note that this route is over-bolted to allow a beginner to gain the easier multi pitch routes from The Shelf.

1. **25m 16+ (13D, A)** Follow the obvious crack that leads up just right of the corner. (If clipping the first bolt, use an extended sling to prevent rope drag.) The line is meant to be easy so just follow the bolt line. (Beta-Spoiler alert! There are a few committing laybacks but stay on the right of the crack. When it feels too hard, look on your right for some holds.)
2. **4m 12 (1D, A)** The belay stance for the first pitch is breathtakingly exposed and located to enable the belayer to see/hear/help the second. From here, gaining the actual top of The Shelf was just unnecessarily scary and dangerous resulting in this short pitch. From the belay stance, let your second

step to the right and around the block that the anchors are on. Just behind the little tree is one hanger, clip this and step up the corner and mantle up. There is an obvious set of anchors on the rock face. Tie in, let your belayer make a knot on a bite and tie himself in and bring him safely to you. You can now coil your rope and enjoy the view.

Bolted by: 05 Oct 2014 A. Louw.

First ascent: 05 Oct 2014 A. Louw.

Follow The Shelf to the right, ducking under a small tree. 3-4m past the small tree, you will need to step up onto ground a meter or so higher than where you are. There are some small dead trees here. Please be careful as the grass is really slippery. After stepping up you should be right in front of a big'ish Stamvrug tree in a "corner".

MISGIS 15 (8D, A)

The start of MISGIS is on the arête just to the right of the big'ish Stamvrug tree. The first hanger is about 2m of the ground.

1. **25m 15 (8D, A)** The crux is at the start. Some "spotting" will be in order here. Find the small feet and use the layback to gain the good holds. Follow the easiest line that leads a slight bit to the right and to the start of a vertical wall. Step up vertically for the first move and then follow the stunning holds and feet (all jugs) that leads a little bit to your left. (The wind and water is loud, communicate clearly)
2. **15m 13 (4D, A)** Step to the right and climb up the corner (crux) for a few easy moves. Just below the slab, pick a line that will get you traversing a little bit to the right and the chains. This is a great belay spot with an awesome view. (The wind and water is loud, communicate clearly)
3. **25m 14 (6D, A)** Climb up to the first hanger and then follow a natural line of "least resistance" angling up to your right. When looking up this line, you will see a little green tree against the ski-line. To the right and behind/past this tree is two clean ledges above each other and this is where the route tops out. (two nice mantle moves to provide a grand finale after the scramble). (it is hard to hear your second from here)

Additional info on pitch 3 - This pitch is easy and well led-out so look far ahead to find the hangers. Following the line of "least resistance" you will find finding 3 hangers hidden in the grass at each location where you will need to "climb". Just past/below the tree you were aiming for, you will turn to your left and out of the "line of least resistance". (you should see the hangers against the largest rocks in the area). Pull through the two mantle moves to clip into the chains. Enjoy the view.

Bolted by: 27-28 Oct 2014 A. Louw.

First ascent: 05 Oct 2014 A. Louw.

PHOTO RD



Just past the first hanger of EASIER THAN IT LOOKED (13)



Looking down from the anchors on the “first pitch” of EXPECTATIONS (16)



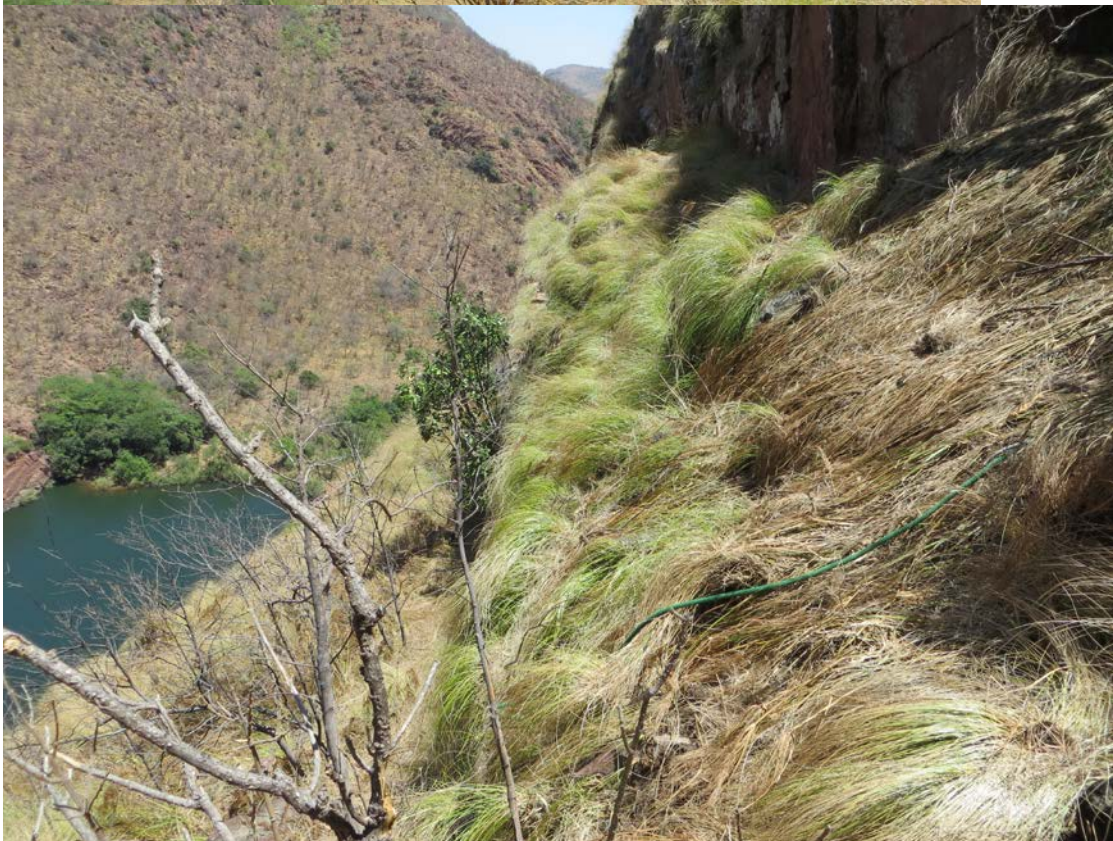
Topping out on the ledge after the short 4m second pitch of EXPECTATIONS (16)



(Taken after topping out on EXPECTATIONS). The Ledge is quite wide but it is slanted a bit, full of slippery grass with an exposed feeling



This indicates the short walk from topping out on EXPECTATIONS (16) to the start of MISGIS by the tree



The walk is on the lower level seen on the left of this photo, with the dodgy “step up” by the small dead trees seen on the front of the photo. The green rope was installed to aid as the grass is slippery.



The main ledge has lots of space and flat, clear baboon walkways. It is slanted but safe and wide



Taken from the anchors of the second pitch of MISGIS (13 pitch). The actual climb is not in the grass but on a clear slab.